

Media Under a Microscope

Purpose

Students will analyze media as sources for information, entertainment, persuasion, interpretation of events, and transmission of culture.

Materials

For the teachers: chalk, chalkboard

For the students: copies of Black Line Master (BLM) *Carefully Watching*, chart paper

Activity

A. Pre-Activity Discussion

1. Write these five topics on the chalkboard: *information, entertainment, persuasion, interpretation of events, and sharing culture.*
2. Ask students to think about the various programs that they hear and see on television.
3. Ask volunteers to provide program examples for each topic (e.g., information: evening news; entertainment: sitcoms; persuasion: campaign speech or commercial; interpretation of events: talk show, documentary; sharing culture: music program).
4. List program ideas under the corresponding topic, and be sure that all students are familiar with at least one example under each topic heading

B. Listening and Watching

1. Break the class into five groups. Assign a media function to each group: 1) informs, 2) entertains, 3) persuades, 4) interprets events, and 5) transmits culture.
2. Distribute a copy of the BLM *Carefully Watching* to each student. Tell each group of students to find examples of their type of program and to record the examples on the BLM as they watch television.
3. Instruct the groups to compile their examples in a chart to present to the whole class.
4. Have the group describe each show and its purpose. Encourage students to discuss whether or not the show fulfilled its purpose and support the conclusion with examples.

Technology Literacy Standards

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
1	X		X	X		X	X
2						X	X
3	X					X	X
4				X		X	X
5						X	X
6		X				X	
7						X	
8						X	
9						X	
10						X	
11						X	
12						X	
13				X		X	
14						X	
15				X			
16							





X = This Technology Literacy Standard is addressed in this lesson.

= This Technology Literacy Standard is not addressed in this lesson.

Questions for Review

Basic Concepts and Processes

After the groups present their findings, ask the following questions:

-  What are some things that we rely on television to provide for us?
-  What are some things that television might not provide?
-  Which programs provide interpretation of events?
-  Can a show have more than one purpose? What are some examples?

Name: _____

Carefully Watching

Directions: Circle your group's type of program. While watching television, find examples of this type of program. Discuss the point of the show and explain whether the show succeeds or fails in its purpose.

Topic: (circle one)

informs entertains persuades interprets events transmits culture

1. Program:

This program attempts to _____
by _____

Successful?

2. Program:

This program attempts to _____
by _____

Successful?

3. Program:

This program attempts to _____
by _____

Successful?

Carefully Watching

Teacher Directions

Instruct students to circle the type of program that you assigned their group. Ask students to find examples of this type of program when they are watching television. Tell them to complete the chart on the BLM *Carefully Watching* by writing down what they believe is the purpose of the show and detailing ways in which the show attempts to achieve its purpose.

Answer Key

Responses will vary.